2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
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When close to the enemy, each member of the party unwrapped his war medicine in preparation for the real battle. While painting themselves and putting on their charms and other regalia, the warriors sang.[9] Lame Bull, for instance, had a "medicine" war bonnet and there was a special song without words which he sang as he donned it; if there was time, the rest of the party danced while he sang and drummed.[10] Other songs might be sung immediately before going into battle.[11] The words of one such song imply: "If I am killed it doesn't matter; women will bear other children to take my place; I am ready to die." Some individuals, too, had special songs of their own to be sung as they made the charge against the enemy.[12]

The most daring men in battle were said to have been those who wished to die. Men who were grieving over the loss of loved ones were believed to have been especially prone to this indirect method of suicide. Others took this way of gloriously ending their lives out of a sense of pique, or in order to vindicate their honor. In this latter case it was customary for a man who had something discreditable to account for, either on his own part or on the part of some member of his family, to publicly announce that he was about to die by singing the "brave-song" or "death-song" as he rode around the camp circle. This indicated that he would seek the earliest opportunity of losing his life at the hands of the enemy while accomplishing some particularly outstanding war-deed.[13]

It was recognized that even the bravest of men might experience acute fear during battle. "Their souls kind of left them on account of the danger. They looked different from normal and their minds seemed not quite clear. Lame Bull used to say that the effect was quite similar to that of drinking too much whiskey—

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[9] Kroeber, 1908, pp. 192–93 gives details and illustrations of supernatural paraphernalia for war. War medicines, illustrating those which had belonged to Bull Lodge, are presented here, Plate 3, courtesy of Richard Pohrt.

[10] The song recorded as No. 76 is Lame Bull's and is said to be typical of this class of songs.

[11] Two were recorded as No. 16 and No. 17.

[12] Lame Bull's song was recorded as No. 77.

[13] Two such "brave-songs" were recorded as No. 111 and No. 112. See also p. 191.

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right off,—are about the first words a baby says. When a child is backward in learning to talk, the remedy is to feed him meadowlark eggs, hard-boiled. Cora says this treatment was very effective for one of her sons, and Coming Daylight fed them to one of her daughters. They all agreed, however, that the treatment may sometimes be too effective. If anyone is very talkative even today the favorite saying is: "His mother must have fed him meadowlark eggs."

The care of her baby was the first duty of a mother. Of course, if she were a co-wife, the other wives might help her, and in any case the grandmother might take a hand. But Coming Daylight often had no one upon whom she could depend, so she had to be extremely careful. For example, when she was married to Little Man and had an infant in the toddling stage, she would drape a blanket loosely about her hips and while she sat and did beadwork, the infant could play safely at her left hip inside the blanket. The old-timers, moreover, never left a baby alone. When her first child was born Coming Daylight was told by her grandmother never to leave a baby alone; that if it were absolutely necessary she should leave him even for a minute, she should take a small stick, blacken the tip with nicotine, and leave it in the swing or alongside where the infant lay. This was done to keep the "spirits" away. Even Mary feels strongly about leaving a child alone. She tells her daughter about it, but the daughter is very modern. The result is that frequently Mary stays home from a dance rather than leave a grandchild by itself.

If the mother of a young infant was going on a trip, for instance, to pick berries, she invited the baby's *bitd"tao* 'shadow, spirit, soul' saying: "Come on with us or we might leave you. We are going now." If one failed to do this, it would be like leaving part of the baby behind and the baby would be cross all evening.

Sometimes other children in the family would be called upon to look after the infant. They were apt to get tired quickly however and tell their mother: "Hurry up and take your baby or I will drop it." Girls were depended upon more than boys to look after younger siblings, and girls more or less were expected to do so "right from the beginning." The old women felt that formerly

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
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and who was floating on the raft with the Flat Pipe, whether he may then have gone to the whites and taught them, too, how to pray; but all this he considers speculation only.

It should be emphasized that as previously noted, no sacrifices or prayers were ever offered by the Gros Ventres to Ni:həhat himself, nor, it may be here added, to Earthmaker. The Boy once said to his father, Lame Bull: "You talk so much about Ni:həhat. He was a superhuman. He should have been prayed to." "No," Lame Bull replied, "he never told the people to pray to him, but told them to pray to the Supreme Being. He was a man and not worthy to be prayed to."

Earthmaker was the human being, apparently a or the primeval keeper of the Flat Pipe, who knowing the earth was to be covered with water made a raft of logs on which he and the Flat Pipe floated during the great flood.[22] (See full story, No. 3 in Appendix.) Where he came from is unknown. Landing on a mountain top he there made dry land (not *the* earth, the terrestrial globe as such which already existed), and also made a man and woman. He gave the Flat Pipe into the keeping of the man he had made, and taught him the Flat Pipe rite, instructed him how to carry out the rite and to plant tobacco, and told the people how to worship the Supreme Being. The Flat Pipe rite has been known ever since that time. Earthmaker is mentioned only in the Flat Pipe rite. After giving the pipe and the above instructions, he disappeared, and what became of him, whether he died or not, is not known.

Ghosts were called tsë:k. Another name for ghosts was byi'te:' a word that "gives the impression like a hollow-eyed bleached-out skull." An occasional ancestral ghost became the guardian helper of a surviving relative.[23] Gambling power might also be gotten from a ghost. Most ghosts were in their own future abode and did not have any contact at all with the living. In general, apart

[22] He was not floating in the Pipe bowl; this is the Arapaho version.

[23] In 1948 The Boy explained: "Tciya:təwu:nitän (see p. 19) are not tsë:k; tsë:k is the opposite of everything good—you can cuss by calling someone tsë:k. Byi'te:' is even worse. The ancestral ghost is tsätsuwa'a, not tsë:k. Shadow, soul, spirit, echo is bətäto:u. [R.F.]

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In general apart from the ghost helper and gambling power complexes, to be described later, no cult of ghosts existed, and no prayers or food or other offerings were made to them. Ghosts of those who had committed unjustified murder, as defined by the Gros Ventre code, did not go where the other souls went, but stayed where their bodies lay or wandered around and "bothered" the living. If a person suffered a stroke, a ghost, apparently of a murderer, was thought to have caused it and to have twisted the victim's face or mouth and pulled the eyelid down.

Ghosts "bothered" the living in less serious ways, appearing in the shadow and disappearing, whistling, playing tricks, in more recent times rapping on windows, and so forth. The two following stories, told by The Boy in light vein and laughingly, illustrate ghostly ways.

"A war party of brave Gros Ventres started out.[24] Toward evening they came to a timbered stream and made a lodge of willows near a good-sized tree, not knowing that a couple had been buried there. After a good meal, they were singing and enjoying themselves, when they heard someone hollering far off. The hollering kept coming closer and closer to their camp until it got very near. One of the men said: 'We had better start up a fire.' Before anyone got up to fetch wood, wood began being thrown into the tepee. This kept up until the tepee was so loaded up with wood that they were crowded out. They then started to carry the wood out of the tepee. One man remarked: 'I never heard of a ghost killing anybody.' Then they heard the ghost laughing a little distance off. One of the men shot toward the spot from which the laughing was coming, but the ghost laughed all the more. All the men then got back inside the tepee, and one of them said: 'I'll get some wood and we'll make some tea.' A good fire was started, and the old fellows prayed with the pipe. The ghost was meanwhile moving the embers away to keep the fire from burning. Before the snow was fetched to be melted, snow fell from the open center top of the tepee and put the fire out. At this they got scared and said: 'Let's move from here.'

[24] In 1948 The Boy remarked that this happened in Lame Bull's life time; and that the ghost referred to in the story is the kind known as tse:k. [R.F.]

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was just a shell. It must have been some kind of animal with a thin shell."

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The concept of soul-loss as resulting from or accompanying sickness in certain cases was present. "It was held by the old people," The Boy said, "that a person's 'soul" was not inside his body or any organ thereof, but was near or around him. As a sick person got worse, his 'soul' kept getting farther and farther away. If it got too far away, he died. When a person was very sick, people would say: 'His soul is leaving (going away from) him farther and farther."[1] In brief, soul wandering or "soul-loss" was a preliminary to death rather than a cause of disease. We obtained no evidence that the concept of soul-stealing entered at all into Gros Ventre pathology.

Treatment of Illness

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From the causes of disease we now pass to the treatment thereof. While some ailments and cases of illness were thought to be due to natural causes, and others to supernatural causes, the line of demarcation cannot always be sharply drawn. Likewise as regards the prevention and treatment, in some instances they were clearly looked upon by the Gros Ventres as of the purely natural or "rational" order, in others equally clearly of the supernatural order, in some few seemingly of both orders combined, in a few others of uncertain order. While the Gros Ventres quite explicitly distinguished in general theory and in certain specific cases between natural and supernatural prevention and treatment, in actual practice at times, and in many specific cases, they drew no sharp line between the two orders. In the following pages we shall take up first natural or "rational" prevention and treatment, secondly combined or doubtful types of treatment and lastly supernatural types. In general remedies and preventives fall into three more or less corresponding classes: "domestic" remedies known to and freely used by everybody; certain remedies more or less "rational," exclusively owned and used by particular non-profes-

[1] The soul was believed to "kind of leave" a person under stress of great fear. Cf. Flannery, 1953, 92.